

William Lord Building (Brick Store Museum)
117 Main Street, east side, between Green
and Dane Streets
Kennebunk
York County
Maine

HABS No. ME-132

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

WILLIAM LORD BUILDING
(Brick Store Museum)

HABS No. ME-132

Location: 117 Main Street, East side between Green and Dane Streets.
Kennebunk, York County, Maine

Present Owner
and Occupant: The Brick Store Museum, Kennebunk, Maine

Use: Historical Museum

Title: Land was purchased from heirs of Nathaniel Frost by William Lord who built the store in 1825. It remained the property of direct descendants of William Lord until 1947 when it was given to the Brick Store Museum. This organization had begun to use parts of the building in 1936 and was incorporated in 1940. Lessees, the last of which was the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells Water Company, occupied most of the building from 1840, when the owner became more interested in ship building and shipping interests than in his general store, until 1945.

Date of Erection: 1825

Architect: Unknown

Builders, etc.: It was built for William Lord, then 26 years old, for general country trade. Bricks were fired at Wonderbrook, a Kiln a short distance down the Portland Road.

Alterations: A brick addition at the back, containing a storeroom and counting room were added at a slightly later date. About 1840 the second floor was remodeled into an auditorium with anterooms, the inside staircase was removed, and a new staircase was added along the south outside wall of the building, making the first and second floors available for separate use.

The Museum in about 1947 replaced the stairway inside from the first to second floor in the entrance hall (stairs never removed?) and built a winding stair to the attic to supplement the trap-doors between floors. In 1958, the back addition to the building was remodeled into library and office facilities. Also the fireplace at the back of the large first-floor room is now covered over, and the ropes for hoisting goods from floor to floor through trap doors are gone.

Historical Events: On June 25, 1825, as the stone window frames were being put into place on the second floor, General Lafayette, who was being entertained in the town, passed by and the workmen leaned out the windows to cheer.

Old Views: In the Museum is a pre-1876 stereopticon slide showing the building standing clear of its neighbors, taken from the left front.

Sources: "The Brick Store Museum", a pamphlet of the Museum; Mrs. Barbara Kimball of the Museum; and records of the Museum.

Prepared by: Martha Kingsbury
Summer, 1965

Edited for HABS by: Druscilla J. Null
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PART II ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

A. General Statement of Significance:

1. This structure is an excellent example of early commercial architecture of Coastal Maine. Exceedingly well documented, this building is also characterized by significant details including trim, a small safe, and a wheel and windlass for hoisting goods.
2. Condition of the fabric: Excellent

B. Technical Description of the Exterior:

1. This structure is a large two-and-one-half story red brick building, street elevation painted white; door surround, window heads and sills, and foundation walls of granite. Two brick chimneys extend above the cornice and wood balustrade at the street side of the building. End walls extend above the gable roof in parapets. The building is approximately 40' x 80' facing northwest on Main Street. A brick shed extends across the rear of the building.
2. Foundation: Foundation walls are faced with large granite blocks hammer finish.
3. Wall construction: Brick bearing wall in common bond, narrow $\frac{1}{2}$ " joints raked.
4. Stoops: Granite, at front, granite steps at side entrances. An exterior wood stair provides entrance to second floor. (Southwest)
5. Chimneys: Two brick chimneys, beginning at the second floor to serve two small fireplaces, extend through the cornice and roof at the street elevation of the building. Brick caps. One brick chimney at rear.
6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors:
 1. Front doorway has fixed transom of 15 lights. Door has 12 lights in upper panel, three panels below. Doorway into basement and through shed south elevation. Double doors. Doorway into projection of shed extending past northeast wall of building, double doors. Side door has 16 lights, one panel.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Double hung 6/6, 8/8. First floor windows northwest elevation have solid wood board shutters, pivoted pairs hang at one side of each opening. Pintles both sides. Second floor windows have louvered wood shutters hung in conventional manner but overlap due to small spaces between windows. Metal shutters at attic window southwest elevation.

7. Roof: a. gable roof, asphalt shingle covering.
- b. Cornice and eaves. Boxed eave at street elevation, simple wood balustrade at front edge of roof, with short segments of stone cornice in wall at front elevation.
- c. Metal down spouts and gutters. Granite splash block.

C. Technical Description of the Interior:

1. Floor plan. Rectangular with shed at rear.
 - a. Basement: Entered from double doorway at rear (north) elevation under shed, possibly because of a change in grade, and from stair in hallway.
 - b. First floor: Museum-gallery, formerly store area with entrance from street, sub-divided by two piers with 2 round arches, one elliptical arch. Side entrance into stair hall to second floor, gallery and office-library spaces at rear. Ladder stair to second floor from office space. Toilet.
 - c. Second floor: Stair hall and foyer. Large room with raised platform at the northwest side of building. Stair hall for exterior stairway, under stairway to attic, opens into foyer. Storage room (shed roof ceiling) at rear.
 - d. Attic: Unfinished space used for display. The hoist wheel is of special interest, with hatch over interior stairway between first and second floor.
2. Stairways
 - a. Exterior stair to second floor at southwest elevation.
 - b. Interior stairway to second floor and to basement.
3. Flooring: Miscellaneous wood boards and strips of various widths painted or varnished.
4. Finishes:
 - a. Ceiling: Plaster and dry wall
 - b. Wall: Plaster, perforated wall board, some exposed brick wall in shed or "counting room".
5. Doorways and doors: None of importance.
6. Decorative features and Trim:

- a. Two round and one elliptical archways first floor, reeded soffit and fascia pattern, molded keystones. Posts are paneled with reeded cornices.
 - b. Wall safes in masonry compartments, 2 iron doors per opening, one in office space has strap hinges and sliding bolt.
 - c. Balustrade at raised platform second floor museum, square newels and balusters with beveled edges.
 - d. Doorways and window openings in second floor museum have pediment cornices.
7. Notable hardware: Hoist wheel in attic, wood construction, on wood shaft.
 8. Lighting: Modern electric lighting
 9. Heating: Modern hot water system for lower floor only. Two fireplaces in second floor museum at street elevation, fireplace in 2nd floor foyer, fireplace (closed) in first floor museum, and in basement.

D. Site:

1. This building faces southwest on Main Street opposite the Congregational-Unitarian Church and Hope Cemetery, flanked by wood frame buildings of about the same era.
2. No enclosures, outbuildings or landscaping, of any consequence.

Prepared by: F. Blair Reeves, A.I.A.,
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